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THE

Aldburgh

C O N N E C T I O N



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

Discovery Series

Walter Hall, Tuesday, February 15, 7:30 pm

Claire de Sévigné
soprano

Julia Barber
mezzo

Andrew Haji
tenor

Geoffrey Sirett
baritone

Stephen Ralls
piano

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Discovery Series

Tuesday, February 15, 2011

ICH BIN GELIEBT!

Songs for Lovers

Claire de Sévigné, soprano

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The **Discovery Series** presents talented young singers in the Faculty of Music's vocal programmes at the University of Toronto. Applications are invited in the spring and the participants are selected after auditions held jointly by the Faculty and the Aldeburgh Connection. Our concerts are generously sponsored by RBC Foundation, as part of their Emerging Artists Support Project.

*Please reserve your applause until the symbol **

Spanisches Liederspiel (*Emanuel Geibel*),
Op.74 (original version)

Robert Schumann
(1810-56)

The genre of *Liederspiel* is not easily translatable into English. More than a song-cycle for several voices, the term indicates some kind of dramatic action and may be thought of originally as a kind of German "ballad-opera". This type of domestic presentation was popular in the early 19th century, particularly in Berlin, but less so by the time Schumann revived it. Like many fellow composers, he longed, but failed, to write a successful German opera; in the *Spanisches Liederspiel* he found another way of writing vocal music on a grander scale, albeit for the drawing-room.

It dates from the spring of 1849; today's performance is a reconstruction of what is believed to be the original version. Later in the same year, Schumann removed the fourth and sixth numbers and placed them in a new set, the *Spanische Liebeslieder*, Op.138 (which uses piano-duet accompaniment). He also took out

Der Contrabandiste, which has strictly speaking no connection with the pervasive theme of love. However, the original sequence has a better balance of numbers between the various voice types, especially as regards solos for the baritone, and a wider range of expression, from heartsick love to operetta-like gaiety. The texts, by Emanuel Geibel, are translations of old Spanish poems, mostly anonymous.

As in a renaissance madrigal, the sentiments expressed in various ensembles are those of a single person. We begin with a girl experiencing the attentions of a young man for, perhaps, the first time; then he seeks to persuade her to elope. In numbers 3 and 4, the girl realises the sorrows of love, while the duet for soprano and tenor poignantly conveys two lovelorn souls, each unaware of the other's plight. The baritone, in *Romanze*, is rather more sure of himself - but still wishes to have his girlfriend's love confirmed. At the centre of the cycle, a quartet of village gossips playfully taunts the lovers.

In *Melancholie*, the soprano is at her lowest ebb of lovesickness; the tenor, however, confesses his love. After a virtuosic interlude for a gypsy smuggler, *Botschaft* shows a girl, gathering her flowers, with much more awareness than at the beginning of the cycle. The final ensemble, with the mezzo as leader, turns the tables on the gossips by declaring that nothing else matters, since "*Ich bin geliebt!*"

Disc 1:

1. Erste Begegnung (soprano/mezzo) *First Meeting*

Von dem Rosenbusch, o Mutter,
Von den Rosen komm ich;
An den Ufern jenes Wassers
Sah ich Rosen stehn und Knospen;
Von den Rosen komm ich.
An den Ufern jenes Flusses
Sah ich Rosen stehn in Blüte,
Brach mit Seufzen mir die Rosen.

*From the rosebush, O mother;
from the roses I come;
on the banks of those waters
I saw roses and buds;
from the roses I come.
On the banks of that river
I saw roses in bloom,
sighing I picked the roses.*

Und am Rosenbusch, o Mutter,
Einen Jüngling sah ich,
An den Ufern jenes Wassers
Einen schlanken Jüngling sah ich.
An den Ufern jenes Flusses
Sucht nach Rosen auch der Jüngling,
Viele Rosen pflückt er, viele Rosen,
Und mit Lächeln brach die schönste er,
Gab mit Seufzen mir die Rose.

*And by the rosebush, O mother,
I saw a young man,
on the banks of those waters
I saw a slim young man.
On the banks of that river
he also looked for roses,
many roses did he pluck,
and smiling he picked the loveliest,
sighing gave me the rose.*

2. Intermezzo (tenor/baritone)

Und schläfst du, mein Mädchen,
Auf, öffne du mir;
Denn die Stund' ist gekommen,
Da wir wandern von hier.

Und bist ohne Sohlen,
Leg' keine dir an;
Durch reisende Wasser
Geht unsere Bahn,

Durch die tief tiefen Wasser
Des Guadalquivir;
Denn die Stund' ist gekommen,
Da wir wandern von hier.

*Even if you are asleep, my girl,
get up and open the door;
for the time has come
for us to leave here.*

*If you are barefoot,
put no shoes on;
through rushing waters
shall be our way,*

*through the deep, deep waters
of the Guadalquivir;
for the time has come
for us to leave here.*

3. Liebesgram (soprano/mezzo)

Dereinst, dereinst,
O Gedanke mein,
Wirst ruhig sein.

Lässt Liebesglut
Dich still nicht werden,
In kühler Erden,
Da schläfst du gut,
Und ohne Pein
Wirst ruhig sein.

Was du im Leben
Nicht hast gefunden,
Wenn es entschwunden,
Wird dir's gegeben,
Dann ohne Wunden
Wirst ruhig sein.

Love's Sorrow

*One day,
O thoughts of mine,
you will be at rest.*

*Though love's ardour
allows you no peace,
in cool earth
you will sleep well,
and without pain
will be at rest.*

*What in life
you have not found,
when life is finished
will be given you,
then without wounds
you will be at rest.*

4. Lied, Op.138/8 (mezzo)

Hoch, hoch sind die Berge
 Und steil ist ihr Pfad,
 Die Brunnen sprüh'n Wasser
 Und rieseln in's Kraut.

O Mutter, o Mutter,
 Lieb Mütterlein du,
 Dort, dort in die Berge,
 Mit den Gipfeln so stolz,
 Da ging eines Morgens
 Mein süßester Freund.
 Wohl rief ich zurück ihn
 Mit Zeichen und Wort,
 Wohl winkt' ich mit allen
 Fünf Fingern zurück.

Song

*The mountains are high
 and steep is their path,
 the springs spray water,
 trickling into the undergrowth.*

*O mother,
 dearest mother,
 up into those mountains,
 with their proud peaks,
 one morning there went
 my sweetest friend.
 I called him back
 with signs and words,
 I waved him back
 with every finger of my hand.*

5. In der Nacht (soprano/tenor)

Alle gingen, Herz, zur Ruh,
 Alle schlafen, nur nicht du.
 Denn der hoffnungslose Kummer
 Scheucht von deinem Bett den Schlummer,
 Und dein Sinnen schweift in stummer
 Sorge seiner Liebe zu.

At Night

*All have gone to rest, O heart,
 all are sleeping, except you.
 For hopeless grief
 frightens slumber from your bed,
 and your thoughts wander in mute
 sorrow to their love.*

6. Romanze, Op.138/5 (baritone)

Flutenreicher Ebro,
 Blühendes Ufer,
 All ihr grünen Matten,
 Schatten des Waldes,
 Fraget die Geliebte,
 Die unter euch ruhet,
 Ob in ihrem Glücke
 Sie meiner gedenket!

Romance

*Surging river Ebro,
 blossoming banks,
 all you green meadows,
 shaded forests,
 ask my beloved,
 who rests among you,
 whether in her happiness
 she thinks of me!*

Und ihr tauigen Perlen,
 Die ihr im Frührot
 Den grünenden Rasen
 Bunt mit Farben sticket,
 Fraget die Geliebte,
 Wenn sie Kühlung atmet,
 Ob in ihrem Glücke
 Sie meiner gedenket!

*And you dewy pearls,
 who at rosy dawn
 adorn the green grass
 with bright colours,
 ask my beloved,
 when she breathes the cool air,
 whether in her happiness
 she thinks of me!*



Ihr laubigen Pappeln,
Schimmernde Pfade,
Wo leichten Fußes
Mein Mädchen wandelt,
Wenn sie euch begegnet,
Fraget sie, fragt sie,
Ob in ihrem Glücke
Sie meiner gedenket!

Ihr schwärmenden Vögel,
Die den Sonnenaufgang
Singend ihr begrüßet
Mit Flötenstimmen,
Fraget die Geliebte,
Dieses Ufers Blume,
Ob in ihrem Glücke
Sie meiner gedenket!

7. Es ist verrathen (quartet)

Daß ihr steht in Liebesglut,
Schlaue, laßt sich leicht gewahren,
Denn die Wangen offenbaren,
Was geheim im Herzen ruht.



Stets an Seufzern sich zu weiden,
Stets zu weinen statt zu singen,
Wach die Nächte hinzubringen
Und den süßen Schlaf zu meiden;

Das sind Zeichen jener Glut,
Die dein Antlitz läßt gewahren,
Und die Wangen offenbaren,
Was geheim im Herzen ruht.

Liebe, Geld und Kummer halt' ich
Für am schwersten zu verhehlen,
Denn auch bei den strengsten Seelen
Drängen sie sich vor gewaltig.

Jener unruhvolle Mut
Läßt zu deutlich sie gewahren,
Und die Wangen offenbaren,
Was geheim im Herzen ruht.

*You leafy poplars,
shimmering paths,
where with light tread
my girl roams,
when she meets you,
ask her
whether in her happiness
she thinks of me!*

*You swarming birds,
who greet the sunrise
singing
with flute-like voices,
ask my beloved,
the flower of this shore,
whether in her happiness
she thinks of me!*

The Secret is Out

*That you are glowing with passion,
sly ones, can easily be seen,
for your cheeks reveal
your heart's secret.*

*Ever revelling in sighs,
ever weeping instead of singing,
spending wakeful nights
and avoiding sweet sleep;*

*these are signs of that passion
your face reveals,
and your cheeks reveal
your heart's secret.*

*Love, money and grief are to me
the hardest to conceal,
for even with the sternest souls
they force their way out.*

*That restless mood of yours
betrays them too clearly,
and your cheeks reveal
your heart's secret.*

8. **Melancholie** (soprano)

Wann erscheint der Morgen,
 Wann denn,
 Der mein Leben lost
 Aus diesen Banden?

Ihr Augen, vom Leide
 So trübe!
 Saht nur Qual für Liebe,
 Saht nicht eine Freude,
 Saht nur Wunde auf Wunde,
 Schmerz auf Schmerz mir geben,
 Und im langen Leben
 Keine frohe Stunde.
 Wenn es endlich doch geschähe,
 Daß ich säh' die Stunde,
 Wo ich nimmer sähe!

9. **Geständniss** (tenor)

Also lieb' ich Euch, Geliebte,
 Daß mein Herz es nicht mag wagen,
 Irgend einen Wunsch zu tragen,
 Also lieb' ich Euch!

Denn wenn ich zu wünschen wagte,
 Hoffen würd' ich auch zugleich;
 Wenn ich nicht zu hoffen zagte,
 Weiß ich wohl, erzürnt' ich Euch.

Darum ruf' ich ganz alleine
 Nur dem Tod, daß er erscheine,
 Weil mein Herz es nicht mag wagen,
 Einen andern Wunsch zu tragen,
 Also lieb' ich Euch!

Melancholy

*When will the morning come,
 oh when,
 that will release my life
 from these bonds?*

*You eyes, from grief
 so dim!
 saw only torment instead of love,
 saw no joy,
 saw only wounds upon wounds,
 sorrow upon sorrow given me,
 and in my long life
 not one cheerful hour.
 If it would only finally happen
 that I would see the hour
 when I could no longer see!*

Confession

*Thus do I love you, beloved,
 that my heart does not dare
 to express a single wish,
 thus do I love you!*

*For if I dared to wish,
 I would likewise hope;
 if I boldly hoped,
 I know well I would anger you.*

*Therefore I call on death
 alone to appear,
 for my heart does not dare
 to express another wish,
 thus do I love you!*

10. Der Contrabandiste (baritone)

Ich bin der Contrabandiste,
 Weiß wohl Respekt mir zu schaffen.
 Allen zu trotzen, ich weiß es,
 Furcht nur, die hab' ich vor keinem.
 Drum nur lustig, nur lustig!

Wer kauft Seide, Tabak!
 Ja wahrlich, mein Rößlein ist müde,
 Ich eil', ja eile,
 Sonst faßt mich noch gar die Runde,
 Los geht der Spektakel dann.
 Lauf nur zu, mein lustiges Pferdchen,
 Ach, mein liebes, gutes Pferdchen,
 Weißt ja davon mich zu tragen!

11. Botschaft (soprano/mezzo)

Nelken wind' ich und Jasmin,
 Und es denkt mein Herz an ihn.
 Nelken all', ihr flammenroten,
 Die der Morgen mir beschert,
 Zu ihm send' ich euch als Boten
 Jener Glut, die mich verzehrt.

Und ihr weißen Blüten wert,
 Sanft mit Düften grüßet ihn,
 Sagt ihm, daß ich bleich vor Sehnen,
 Daß ich auf ihn harr' in Tränen.

Tausend Blumen, tauumflossen,
 Find' ich neu im Tal erwacht;
 Alle sind erst heut' entsprossen,
 Aber hin ist ihre Pracht,
 Wenn der nächste Morgen lacht.
 Sprich du duftiger Jasmin,
 Sprecht ihr flammenroten Nelken,
 Kann so schnell auch Liebe welken?
 Ach es denkt mein Herz an ihn!

The Smuggler

*I am the smuggler
 and know well how to inspire respect.
 I know how to defy everyone
 And I fear no one.
 So let us be merry!*

*Who will buy silk, tobacco?
 Truly, my pony is tired,
 I hurry, yes, hurry,
 or the patrol will catch me,
 then there'd be quite a rumpus!
 So gallop off, my merry little steed,
 ah! my dear, good little steed,
 you know well how to carry me!*

A Message

*I twine carnations and jasmine
 and my heart thinks of him.
 All you flame-red carnations
 which the morning bestowed on me,
 I send you to him as messengers
 of the passion that consumes me.*

*And you dear white blossoms,
 greet him gently with your fragrance,
 tell him I am pale with longing,
 that I await him in tears.*

*A thousand dew-drenched flowers
 I find newly awakened in the valley;
 they all blossomed only today,
 yet their splendour will be gone
 when next day dawns.
 Speak, you fragrant jasmine,
 speak, you flame-red carnations,
 can love also wither so quickly?
 Ah, my heart thinks of him!*

12. Ich bin geliebt (quartet)

Mögen alle bösen Zungen
Immer sprechen, was beliebt:
Wer mich liebt, den lieb' ich wieder,
Und ich weiß, ich bin geliebt!

Schlimme, schlimme Reden flüstern
Eure Zungen schonungslos,
Doch ich weiß es, sie sind lüstern
Nach unschuld'gem Blute bloß.

Nimmer soll es mich bekümmern,
Schwatz so viel es euch beliebt;
Wer mich liebt, den lieb' ich wieder,
Und ich weiß, ich bin geliebt!

Zur Verleumdung sich verstehtet nur,
Wem Lieb' und Gunst gebrach,
Weil's ihm selber elend gehet
Und ihn niemand minnt und mag.

Darum denk' ich, daß die Liebe,
Dum sie schmähn, mir Ehre giebt;
Wer mich liebt, den lieb' ich wieder,
Und ich weiß, ich bin geliebt!

Wenn ich wär' aus Stein und Eisen,
Möchtet ihr darauf bestehn,
Daß ich sollte von mir weisen
Liebesgruß und Liebesflehn.

Doch mein Herzlein ist nun leider
Weich wie's Gott uns Mädchen giebt.
Wer mich liebt, den lieb' ich wieder,
Und ich weiß, ich bin geliebt!

I am loved

*Let all evil tongues
ever say what they like:
whoever loves me, I love back,
and I know I am loved!*

*Wicked, wicked tidings
your tongues whisper mercilessly,
but I know they merely hunger
for innocent blood.*

*Never shall it worry me,
gossip as much as you want;
whoever loves me, I love back,
and I know I am loved!*

*Slander is all that's understood
by those starved of love and affection,
because they're so wretched themselves
and no one woos or wants them.*

*That's why I think that love,
which they revile, gives me honour;
whoever loves me, I love back,
and I know I am loved!*

*If I were made of stone and iron,
you might insist
that I should reject
lover's greeting and lover's plea.*

*But my little heart is now, alas,
tender, as God grants us maidens.
whoever loves me, I love back,
and I know I am loved!*

*

 INTERMISSION

Quatre Chansons de jeunesse (soprano)

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

At the start of his career, like many impecunious young musicians, Debussy played for singing lessons. Still in his teens, in the studio he fell in love with an older, married woman, Marie-Blanche Vasnier, who must have been a very talented coloratura soprano, judging from the songs he wrote for her. A large number were composed between 1879 and 1887, but then put by as not worthy to stand alongside later song-cycles such as *Ariettes oubliées* or *Fêtes galantes*. It was not until 1969 that this collection of four songs was published; since then, many more have become available from various publishers, so that we have a clearer idea of the range of Debussy's early song writing. The *Quatre Chansons* were not grouped together by the composer, but they nevertheless make a successful sequence, ranging from sparkling, rather sardonic, gaiety through to the ardour of *Apparition*. Here, in the midst of a quasi-operatic Massenet manner, Debussy speaks with his own, new-found voice.

Disc 2

Four Early Songs

1. *Pantomime* (Paul Verlaine)

Pierrot, qui n'a rien d'un Clitandre,
Vide un flacon sans plus attendre,
Et, pratique, entame un pâté.

*Pierrot, who is no Clitandre,
gulps down a bottle without delay,
and, being practical, starts on a pie.*

Cassandre, au fond de l'avenue,
Verse une larme méconnue
Sur son neveu déshérité.

*Cassandre, at the end of the avenue,
sheds an unnoticed tear
for his disinherited nephew.*

Ce faquin d'Arlequin combine
L'enlèvement de Colombine
Et pirouette quatre fois.

*That rogue of a Harlequin schemes
how to abduct Colombine
and pirouettes four times.*

Colombine rêve, surprise
De sentir un coeur dans la brise
Et d'entendre en son coeur des voix.

*Colombine dreams, surprised
to sense a heart in the breeze
and to hear voices in her heart.*

2. **Clair de lune** (*Verlaine*)

Votre âme est un paysage choisi
 Que vont charmant masques et
 bergamasques,
 Jouant du luth et dansant, et quasi
 Tristes sous leurs déguisements
 fantasques.

Tout en chantant sur le mode mineur
 L'amour vainqueur et la vie opportune,
 Ils n'ont pas l'air de croire à leur bonheur,
 Et leur chanson se mêle au clair de
 lune,

Au calme clair de lune triste et beau,
 Qui fait rêver, les oiseaux dans les arbres,
 Et sangloter d'extase les jets d'eau,
 Les grands jets d'eau sveltes parmi les
 marbres.

Moonlight

*Your soul is a chosen landscape
 bewitched by masques and
 bergamasques,
 playing the lute, dancing and almost
 sad under their fanciful disguises.*

*Singing as they go in a minor key
 of conquering love and life's favours,
 they seem not to believe in their fortune
 and their song mingles with the
 moonlight,*

*the calm moonlight, sad and fair,
 that sets birds dreaming in the trees
 and the fountains sobbing in rapture,
 tall and svelte amid marble statues.*

3. **Pierrot** (*Théodore de Banville*) - on the air "Au clair de la lune."

Le bon Pierrot, que la foule contemple,
 Ayant fini les noces d'Arlequin,
 Suit en songeant le boulevard du
 Temple.

Une fillette au souple casaquin
 En vain l'agace de son oeil coquin;
 Et cependant mystérieuse et lisse
 Faisant de lui sa plus chère délice,
 La blanche lune aux cornes de taureau
 Jette un regard de son oeil en coulisse
 À son ami Jean Gaspard Debureau.*

*Good Pierrot, watched by the crowd,
 having done with Harlequin's wedding,
 drifts dreamily along the boulevard
 du Temple.*

*A girl in a flowing blouse
 vainly leads him on with her teasing eyes;
 and meanwhile, mysterious and sleek,
 cherishing him above all else,
 the white moon with horns like a bull
 ogles her friend
 Jean Gaspard Debureau.**

[* a famous actor and portrayer of Pierrot - played by Jean-Louis Barrault in the film *Les Enfants du paradis*.]

4. Apparition (Stéphane Mallarmé)

La lune s'attristait. Des séraphins
 en pleurs
 Rêvant, l'archet aux doigts, dans
 le calme des fleurs
 Vaporeuses, tiraient de mourantes violes
 De blancs sanglots glissant sur l'azur
 des corolles.
 - C'était le jour béni de ton premier
 baiser.
 Ma songerie aimant à me martyriser
 S'enivrait savamment du parfum de
 tristesse
 Que même sans regret et sans déboire
 laisse
 La cueillaison d'un Rêve au coeur qui
 l'a cueilli.
 J'errais donc, l'oeil rivé sur le pavé
 vieilli
 Quand avec du soleil aux cheveux, dans
 la rue
 Et dans le soir, tu m'es en riant
 apparue
 Et j'ai cru voir la fée au chapeau de
 claret
 Qui jadis sur mes beaux sommeils
 d'enfant gâté
 Passait, laissant toujours de ses mains
 mal fermées
 Neiger de blancs bouquets d'étoiles
 parfumées.

*The moon grew sad. Weeping
 seraphim,
 dreaming, bows in hand, in the calm
 of hazy
 flowers, drew from dying violets
 white sobs that glided over the blue
 petals.
 - It was the blessed day of your first
 kiss.
 My dreaming, wishing to torment me,
 grew cleverly drunk on the perfumed
 sadness
 which - without regret or bitter taste -
 a Dream leaves behind in the heart.
 So I wandered, eyes fixed on the old
 pavement
 when with sun flecked hair, in the
 street
 and in the evening, you appeared
 laughing
 and I thought I saw the fairy with cap
 of light
 who long ago, through my spoilt
 child's dreams,
 passed, letting fall from half-closed
 hands
 bouquets of perfumed stars like
 snow.*

Four songs (mezzo)

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Elgar is not well known for his recital songs. Apart from the cycle *Sea Pictures* for mezzo and orchestra, his vocal music is exemplified by large-scale cantatas and oratorios, culminating in *The Dream of Gerontius*, *The Apostles* and *The Kingdom*. In a more intimate idiom, however, he created a few pieces which are more than superior examples of the late Victorian ballad. The first two songs in this group have a link, in that both were originally entitled "Lute Song". The first was set in 1897 to a little poem by Elgar's wife, Alice. The words were later slightly altered, the title changed to "In Haven" and the song used as the second of *Sea Pictures*. In the piano version, however, the accompaniment retains a lute-like texture. "Queen Mary's Song" (1887) is a setting of Tennyson's "Lute Song" which appears in his verse drama, *Queen Mary*, depicting the life of Mary Tudor and her unhappy marriage to Philip II of Spain.

"Rondel", being a 19th century translation of a poem by the 13th century poet and chronicler, Jean Froissart, is set appropriately in a quasi-archaic style which Hubert Parry would also use in his songs to old English verse. (In 1890, Elgar composed his orchestral overture, *Froissart*.) "The Shepherd's Song", finally, uses a lyrical poem by the contemporary poet and journalist, Barry Pain. The biography of Elgar through the 1890s is punctuated by repeated and unsuccessful attempts to get these songs published - even at no financial benefit to the composer.

5. **In Haven** (In Capri) (*Alice Elgar*)

Closely let me hold thy hand,
 Storms are sweeping sea and land;
 Love alone will stand.

Closely cling, for waves beat fast,
 Foam-flakes cloud the hurrying blast;
 Love alone will last.

Kiss my lips, and softly say:
 Joy, sea-swept, may fade to-day;
 Love alone will stay.

6 **Queen Mary's Song** (*Alfred Tennyson*)

Hapless doom of woman happy in betrothing,
 Beauty passes like a breath and love is lost in loathing;
 Low! my lute: speak low, but say the world is nothing.
 Low! lute, low!

Love will hover round the flowers when they first awaken;
 Love will fly the fallen leaf, and not be overtaken;
 Low, my lute! O low, my lute! we fade and are forsaken.
 Low, dear lute, low!

7. **Rondel** (*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, after Froissart*)

Love, what wilt thou with this heart of mine?
 Nought see I sure or fixed in thee!
 I do not know thee, nor what deeds are thine:
 Love, what wilt thou with this heart of mine?
 Nought see I fixed or sure in thee!
 Shall I be mute, or vows with prayers combine?
 Ye who are blessed in loving, tell it me:
 Nought see I permanent or sure in thee:
 Love, what wilt thou with this heart of mine?

8, **The Shepherd's Song** (*Barry Pain*)

Down the dusty road together
Homeward pass the hurrying sheep,
Stupid with the summer weather,
Too much grass and too much sleep,
I, their shepherd, sing to thee
That summer is a joy to me.

Down the shore rolled waves all creamy
With the flecked surf yesternight;
I swam far out in starlight dreamy,
In moving waters cool and bright,
I, the shepherd, sing to thee
I love the strong life of the sea.

And upon the hillside growing
Where the fat sheep dozed in shade,
Bright red poppies I found blowing,
Drowsy, tall and loosely made,
I, the shepherd, sing to thee
How fair the bright red poppies be.

To the red-tiled homestead bending
Winds the road, so white and long
Day and work are near their ending
Sleep and dreams will end my song,
I, the shepherd, sing to thee;
In the dreamtime answer me.

Five Poems by Thomas Hardy (baritone)

John Ireland (1879-1962)

In her recent biography on Thomas Hardy (1840-1928), Clair Tomalin argues that he became a truly great English poet after the death of his first wife, Emma, calling the poems he wrote in her memory, "one of the finest and strangest celebrations of the dead in English poetry." This reflection is not as simple as it may seem. In his youth, Hardy met and fell in love with Emma Gifford, whom he married in 1874. He later became estranged from his wife, who died in 1912 - but her death had a traumatic effect on him. Afterwards, he made a trip to Cornwall to revisit places linked with their courtship, and the poems which he began to write reflect upon her passing. In 1914, Hardy married his secretary Florence Dugdale, who was 39 years his junior. However, he remained preoccupied with his first wife's death and tried to overcome his remorse by writing more poetry.

The poems which Ireland chose in 1925 for his song-cycle had been recently published in 1922 and 1925, but probably date back nearer to the time of Emma's death. They are suffused with the aching sense of love achieved but then lost, and the loss when it is too late, regretted. The first two poems celebrate the acceptance of love, leading to the fierce lyricism of the third song and its "winnowing-fan". "The tragedy of that moment" depicts a terrible estrangement, succeeded finally by the building of "a temple" and "its shrine" to the late lamented one.

9. I

Beckon to me to come
With handkerchief or hand,
Or finger mere or thumb;
Let forecasts be but rough,
Parents more bleak than bland

'Twill be enough

Maid mine,

'Twill be enough!

Two fields, a wood, a tree,
Nothing now more malign
Lies between you and me;
But were they bysm, or bluff,
Or snarling sea, one sign

Would be enough

Maid mine,

Would be enough!

10. II

In my sage moments I can say,
 Come not near,
 But far in foreign regions stay,
 So that here
 A mind may grow again serene and clear.

But the thought withers. Why should I
 Have fear to earn me
 Fame from your nearness, though thereby
 Old fires new burn me,
 And lastly, maybe, tear and overturn me!

So I say, Come: deign again shine
 Upon this place,
 Even if unslackened smart be mine
 From that sweet face,
 And I faint to a phantom past all trace.

11. III

It was what you bore with you, Woman,
 Not inly were,
 That throned you from all else human,
 However fair!

It was that strange freshness you carried
 Into a soul
 Whereon no thought of yours tarried
 Two moments at all.

And out from his spirit flew death,
 And bale, and ban,
 Like the corn-chaff under the breath
 Of the winnowing-fan.

IV

The tragedy of that moment
 Was deeper than the sea,
 When I came in that moment
 And heard you speak to me!

What I could not help seeing
 Covered life like a blot;
 Yes, that which I was seeing,
 And knew that you were not!

V

Dear, think not that they will forget you:
 - If craftsmanly art should be mine
 I will build up a temple, and set you
 Therein as its shrine.

They may say: "Why a woman such honour?"
 - Be told, "O so sweet was her fame,
 That a man heaped this splendour upon her;
 None now knows his name."

*

Three settings of Victor Hugo (tenor)

Franz Liszt (1811-86)

Apart from his native Hungarian, French was the language in which Franz Liszt felt most at home - so his songs in that tongue are some of his finest. Their immediacy also comes from his having set the texts of poets whom he knew personally, like Victor Hugo. The songs achieve a successful synthesis of the grand manner typical of the mid-nineteenth century (and of a piano virtuoso) with an intimacy which the poems demand. As Graham Johnson remarks, "This is love music which encourages biographical parallels: the exalted relationship between Petrarch and Laura ["Oh! quand je dors"] seems mirrored by that of the composer and [his mistress] Marie d'Agoût." 

14. S'il est un charmant gazon

S'il est un charmant gazon
Que le ciel arrose,
Où brille en toute saison
Quelque fleur éclore,
Où l'on cueille à pleine main
Lys, chèvrefeuille et jasmin,
J'en veux faire le chemin
Où ton pied se pose!

*If there is a charming lawn
watered by heaven,
where in every season
some flower blossoms,
where one can gather armfuls
of lilies, honeysuckle and jasmine,
I wish to make it the path
Where your feet tread!*

S'il est un rêve d'amour,
Parfumé de rose,
Où l'on trouve chaque jour
Quelque douce chose,
Un rêve que Dieu bénit,
Où l'âme à l'âme s'unit,
Oh! j'en veux faire le nid
Où ton coeur se pose!

*If there is a dream of love,
scented with roses,
where one finds every day
some sweet thing,
a dream blessed by God,
where soul is joined to soul,
Oh! I wish to make of it the nest
where your heart reposes!* 



Oh! quand je dors

Oh! quand je dors, viens auprès
de ma couche,
Comme à Pétrarque apparaissait Laura,
Et qu'en passant ton haleine me
touché . . .
Soudain ma bouche
S'entr'ouvrira!

*Ah! while I sleep, come close to my
couch,
as Laura once appeared to Petrarch,
and in passing let your breath
touch me . . .
at once my lips
will part!*

Sur mon front morne où peut-être
s'achève
Un songe noir qui trop longtemps dura,
Que ton regard comme un astre se lève . . .
Soudain mon rêve
Rayonnera!

*On my sombre brow where perhaps
is ending
a black dream that lasted too long,
may your gaze rise like a star . . .
at once my dream
will shine!*

Puis sur ma lèvre où voltige une flamme,
Éclair d'amour que Dieu même épura,
Pose un baiser, et d'ange deviens
femme . . .
Soudain mon âme
S'éveillera!

*Then on my lips, where a flame flickers,
a flash of love purified by God,
place a kiss, and from angel become
woman . . .
suddenly my soul
will awake!*



Enfant, si j'étais roi

Enfant, si j'étais roi, je donnerais
l'empire,
Et mon char, et mon sceptre, et mon
peuple à genoux,
Et ma couronne d'or, et mes bains
de porphyre,
Et mes flottes, à qui la mer ne peut
suffire,
Pour un regard de vous!

*Child, if I were king, I'd give my
empire,
my chariot, my sceptre, my kneeling
people,
my golden crown, my porphyry baths,
my fleets that the ocean cannot
contain,
for one look from you!*

Si j'étais Dieu, la terre et l'air avec
les ondes,
Les anges, les démons courbés devant
ma loi,
Et le profond chaos aux entrailles
fécondes,
L'éternité, l'espace et les cieux et
les mondes,
Pour un baiser de toi!

*If I were God, the earth, the air, the
waves,
the angels, the devils bowed before
my law,
and the fertile womb of profound
chaos,
eternity, space, the heavens, the
worlds,
for one kiss from you!*

17. Encore: Sorry, you'll have to listen
to the end of Track 16 to catch this.

The Aldeburgh Connection's next presentation will be *C'est mon plaisir* - music and art in the Boston *palazzo* of Isabella Stewart Gardner - featuring soprano NATHALIE PAULIN, mezzo KRISZTINA SZABO and baritone BENJAMIN COVEY. It will take place here in Walter Hall on Sunday, March 6, at 2:30 pm. For tickets, please call 416.735.7982.

For more information about the concerts of the Aldeburgh Connection, visit:
www.aldeburghconnection.org

About the artists

Montreal born soprano **Claire de Sévigné** is currently in the second year of her Master's degree in opera at the University of Toronto where she studies with Darryl Edwards. She recently appeared as Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel* at U of T. Last year Claire sang the roles of Flaminia in *Il mondo della luna* with an "expressive voice and nice coloratura" (Opera Canada) and Cunegonde in *Candide* with U of T. Last summer she appeared as Cleopatra in Handel's *Giulio Cesare* with the Centre of Opera Studies in Italy, where she worked closely with Canadian soprano Wendy Nielsen and director Tom Diamond. In the summer of 2009 Claire participated in the Canadian Vocal Arts Institute, studying with renowned coaches and teachers including Metropolitan Opera coach Joan Dornemann. She was also a member of the Janiec Opera Company at the Brevard Music Center where she performed in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and *Gianni Schicchi*.

Claire earned her Bachelor's degree in vocal performance from the Schulich School of Music, McGill University, in 2009. She appeared in many Opera McGill productions including *La rondine*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, and *Thésée*. As a recent recipient of a SSHRC Master's grant from the Government of Canada she will also focus her studies on the relationship between language and drama in opera.

Mezzo soprano **Julia Barber** is currently in her second year of the Master in Music degree at the University of Toronto studying with Professor Lorna MacDonald. Previously, she studied with Canadian mezzo sopranos Patricia Green and Anita Krause-Wiebe at the University of Western Ontario. Last summer, she had the opportunity to perform the role of Stephano in Opera NUOVA's production of *Roméo et Juliette* under the direction of acclaimed Canadian director Michael Cavanagh and conductor Rose Thompson.

She has coached with such established artists as John Hess and Dáirine Ní Mheadhra through the Queen of Puddings Training program. She also had the chance to work with conductor Simone Luti, director Tim Nelson and mezzo soprano Sophie Roland while attending the Canadian Operatic Arts Academy. Previous roles include Hansel (*Hansel and Gretel*), Paquette (*Candide*), and



Olga (*Eugene Onegin*) with the University of Toronto Opera Division, Jo (*Little Women*) with Halifax Summer Opera Workshop, and Nursemaid 2 (*Street Scene*) with UWOpera. Later this season, she can be seen performing the role of Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* with the University of Toronto Opera Division.

Tenor **Andrew Haji** is in his final year as an undergraduate in the Voice Performance programme at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music, studying with Darryl Edwards. He recently appeared as Cecco in Haydn's *Il mondo della luna* and as Vanderdendur and Ragotski in Bernstein's *Candide*, both with the University of Toronto's Opera Division. He also recently performed Handel's *Messiah* with the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus in Buffalo, New York. Next month, he will perform the role of Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* at the U of T.

In May of 2009, Andrew attended the Canadian Operatic Arts Academy in London, Ontario, where he performed scenes from Britten's *Albert Herring*, *Ariadne auf Naxos* by Richard Strauss, Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims* and Verdi's *Falstaff*. In the summer of 2010, he attended the Centre for Opera Studies in Italy, where he performed the role of Nemorino in Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*.

Baritone **Geoffrey Sirett** is currently in his final year of the MMus in Opera degree at the University of Toronto, studying with Lorna MacDonald. Geoffrey holds a BMus and Artist-Diploma from the University of Western Ontario, where he received the UWO Alumni Gold Medal for the highest GPA. On stage he has performed leading roles in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, Haydn's *Il mondo della Luna*, Leoncavallo's *I pagliacci*, Lehar's *The Merry Widow*, Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, and Britten's *Albert Herring*. Geoffrey performed the role of the Count in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* as a fellowship student of the Aspen Opera Theater Center during the summer of 2010.



Geoffrey was a winner in the Canadian Conservatory vocal competition, the Czech and Slovak International Voice Competition, and Four-City District winner and regional finalist of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. He is a grant holder of the Jacqueline Desmarais Foundation for Young Canadian Opera Singers and recipient of the 2010 Vancouver Opera Guild Career Development Grant. As winner of the 2010 Jim and Charlotte Norcop Prize in Song, Geoffrey presented a song recital in January with world-renowned accompanist Martin Katz.

Stephen Ralls began his musical career in England with the English Opera Group, where he was selected as chief répétiteur for Britten's last opera, *Death in Venice*, and played the important piano part in the first performances and on the Decca/London recording. This led to recital appearances with the tenor, Sir Peter Pears, at the Aldeburgh Festival and on the BBC, and to Mr Ralls's appointment to the staff of the Britten-Pears School in Aldeburgh. In 1978, he joined the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, where he held the position of Musical Director of the Opera Division from 1996 to 2008. With

Bruce Ubukata, he founded the concert organization, the Aldeburgh Connection, in 1982 and the Bayfield Festival of Song in 2007. He has worked with the Canadian Opera Company, the Banff Centre and the National Arts Centre.

His recordings include *L'Invitation au voyage: songs of Henri Duparc* (CBC Records), several releases with the Aldeburgh Connection, including *Benjamin Britten: the Canticles*, *Schubert among friends* and *Our own songs*, and the Juno award winning *Songs of Travel* with baritone, Gerald Finley. In October 2010, with Bruce Ubukata, he received an Opera Canada "Ruby" award for his work in opera and with young singers.

About the Aldeburgh Connection

Aldeburgh is the small town on the east coast of England where Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears and Eric Crozier founded the Festival of Music which flourishes to this day. **Stephen Ralls** and **Bruce Ubukata** have visited and worked there for many summers, together with many of the singers who appear with the Aldeburgh Connection.

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